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Does the CIA dominate U.S. foreign policy?

By Frank Bellamy
(Last of three articles)

"If war is too important to be left to the generals, it should be clear that intelligence is too important to be left unsupervised."

—Hanson Baldwin, N.Y. Times, Jan. 15, 1956.

SPYING HAS BECOME a major industry of American government. According to Harper's magazine (April, 1958) no fewer than nine separate cloak-and-dagger outfits are at work, carrying out clandestine intrigue on a worldwide basis and spending each year in the neighborhood of \$750,000,000 of the taxpayers' money.

"Though exact figures are secret, estimates suggest that between 20,000 to 30,000 full-time intelligence specialists currently are on government payroll," said Harry Howe Ransom, author of Central Intelligence and National Security, in the Christian Science Monitor (Dec. 1, 1958). "The cost probably approaches \$750,000,000 annually."

The most lushly financed, of course, is the Central Intelligence Agency. The other eight, which have to get along on lesser amounts, are the intelligence branches of the National Security Agency, State Dept., Atomic Energy Commission, U.S. Information Agency, FBI, Army, Navy and Air Force.

NO CONTROLS: The CIA, now housed in 30 or more scattered buildings in Washington, is erecting an enormous \$55,000,000 edifice for itself across the river in Virginia. When completed it will be the world's biggest spy center, accommodating more than 10,000 CIA employees. Best estimates place CIA's total domestic payroll at 14,000 and its budget near \$500,000,000 a year.

After it was established in 1947 under President Truman's administration, this



professional undercover army was granted by law a degree of immunity from accountability for funds, personnel and activities probably never exceeded by any other Federal agency in American history.

• It is the only major agency not subject to Congressional committee control.

• Nobody except the President and a

few other persons, including ten or 12 select Congressmen who are briefed once a year at budget time, know how much the secret legion spends. All funds for CIA are disguised and concealed in appropriations for other agencies.

• The funds themselves are not subject to audit. Top gunshoe Allen Welsh Dulles can write a \$1,000,000 check without explaining the expenditure to anyone. He is the only man in Washington, including the President, with such power.

• The CIA is exempted by law from the Civil Service requirements imposed

on most government agencies; it can hire and fire at will.

ington paper some months back of a free-for-all in a downtown restaurant between CIA and FBI men. Each group, the paper reported, had mistaken the other for Communist agents." (N.Y. Times, March 18, 1958).

On the expensive side, there was the time—as reported by columnist Westbrook



BARRICADES IN LEBANON: THE CIA WAS SURPRISED

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opposing that government."

Pegler, by the way, thinks the CIA is "no good and ought to be wiped out."

'PLAIN LOUSY': Then there are intelligence failures for which CIA would rather not be held accountable. The most publicized fumble was its flat-footedness on the eruption of revolutions in Lebanon and Iraq. Both took place without advance forecasts from our vast espionage network. "They didn't know what was going on," Sen. Wayne Morse (D-Ore.) angrily charged. "Our intelligence is just plain lousy."

The N.Y. Times' military expert Hanson Baldwin said (Jan. 15, 1956): "The intelligence record of the nation and the CIA in particular is spotty. There have been notable successes but also notable failures. . . . A great many other incidents also suggest that all is not well

SACRED COW: This is too much power and super-secrecy for Sen. Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.). Four times he has sponsored bills to create a joint Senate-House watchdog committee to scrutinize CIA. Despite editorial backing from such influential papers as the N.Y. Times and Wall Street Journal, Mansfield lost each time. Most of his colleagues in Congress still look on CIA as a sacred cow.

Why is the CIA so inordinately jealous of its power and prerogatives, so anxious to maintain itself beyond the reach of the lawmakers? One reason, the record seems to indicate, is to cover up bungles—some ludicrous, most of them expensive—which would open it to ridicule.

On the ludicrous side, "there are such stories as the news account in a Wash-

with our intelligence establishments."

A more significant motive for secrecy than concealing bumbles and fumbles is CIA's desire to keep its bag of "dirty tricks" from the eyes of the public. It realizes that millions would disapprove if many of its devious dealings came to light. Protests would surely follow exposure of the extent to which CIA adventurism has shaped U.S. diplomacy and, in policy toward some nations, replaced it altogether.

POLICY MAKER? Charles Edmundson, who spent eight years in the U.S. Foreign Service before resigning two years ago over Secy. Dulles' policies, accused the CIA in February's *Progressive* magazine of being "an activist group which steps in boldly to dictate foreign policy in areas not covered by decisions of Congress, the State Dept., or the White House." Edmundson went on:

"It executes its projects without concern over the reaction of the public. The incidents it provokes are never acknowledged, yet can be decisive in shaping—or misshaping—public opinion and foreign policy. . . .

"The most fundamental of all civil liberties is the right of the citizen to make up his mind on public issues without having the facts concealed or distorted by his government. The record shows that the CIA, in cooperation with the State Dept., systematically contravenes this principle. A few examples of what is happening creep obscurely into some of the better newspapers, but nowhere, save in a few liberal publications, are Americans warned of the potential consequences of the far-flung operations of the secrecy-ridden CIA."

Liaison between the State Dept. and CIA is close. Both are headed by a Dulles. Both employ about the same number of people (18,000 for the State Dept. vs. an estimated 14,000 for the CIA). If the CIA's \$500,000,000 budget estimate is correct, it is more than twice as much as the State Dept. spends in 1953 diplomatic outposts around the world.

In any case, the secret decisions of the Brothers Dulles affect the fate of the world. When ill-directed, they make enemies abroad and cause great damage at home.

Hanson Baldwin summed it up well (*N.Y. Times*, Jan. 15, 1956):

"Uncontrolled secret intelligence agencies are in a position to dominate policy making, and hence government. Their very secrecy gives them power; there are few to accept or reject their findings."

"An over-powerful secret intelligence agency is dangerous, not a threat to the formulation of sound policy, but to the stability of democratic institutions."